

Remarks

Claims 2-6, 9-11, 23, 25 and 27-32 are currently pending. Claim 25 has been canceled. Claims 27, 29 and 30 have been amended. No new claims have been added. No new matter has been included. Applicants assert that all claims are now in condition for allowance as set forth more fully below.

103 Rejections

Claim 29 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Metzler publication in view of the Zarowitz publication. Claims 2-6, 9-11, 23, 25, 27-28 and 30-32 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Metzler publication in view of the Zarowitz publication and the Kraft publication. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 29 and 23

The Office Action has rejected claim 29 by stating that Metzler teaches all of the elements except for reviewing the information of the quality of the customer contacts to determine performance of the employee. However, the Office Action states that Zarowitz teaches software that allows reports to be set up to track the progress of a project or employee's performance. It is further stated that it would have been obvious to combine Zarowitz with Metzler to provide for evaluating the employees as related to their sales responsibilities.

Amended claim 29 recites, receiving customer contact information related to a customer contact from the employee, including information related to the quality of the customer contact, the quality of the contact being indicated by one of a set of specific guidelines indicating the value of the contact to the sales representatives including: an indication of whether the contact with the particular entity is for post-sale maintenance and an indication of whether the contact with the particular entity is for furthering future sales opportunities that lead to additional business.

Claim 29 has been amended further to recite receiving customer contact information related to a customer contact from the employee related to the classification of the contact where information concerning the quality of the contact has also been

received about the particular entity, the class of the contact being indicated by a set of specific guidelines including an indication of whether the contact with the particular entity is a reactive contact, a contact requiring a proactive sales effort or a target contact where customers classified as reactive are those that initiated the contact with the sales representative, where customers classified as proactive are those where a sales representative initiated the contact with the customer and targets which are customers with no known relationship with the company but may be interested in services of the company.

As such, the claim language recites features of a method for tracking both the quality and the classification of the same customer contact (i.e. a communication) which is not taught by the combined references of Metzler and Zarowitz. Metzler's disclosure (Para. 11-14), regarding the rating of prospects, is concerned with the interest level of the customer for future sales, only, as contrasted with noting whether the discussion was an in depth post-sale follow up maintenance call versus an offering of future sales. Metzler, therefore, does not track quality as defined in claim 29

More specifically, the Office Action appears to equate the "type of contact" (Para. 12) and the prospect's "rating" (Para. 13) disclosed in Metzler to the "quality" and "classification" of a customer contact, respectively, recited in Claim 29. However, the "type of contact" categories (friend, influencer, vendor, existing client, etc.) in Metzler are neither classifications nor quality indications for a contact with a customer, as defined in claim 29.

Further, Metzler's term "contacts" refers to a broad universe of people that may refer sales prospects at some time in the future. Conversely, the term "ratings" of Metzler (Para. 13) indicates the probability of a sale to a prospect and not to the wider universe of a Metzler defined "contact". To rephrase, the terms "contact" and "ratings" of Metzler apply to two different groups of people and neither term applies to contacts (i.e. communications) with customers regarding a past sales follow up as recited in Claim 29. Therefore, Metzler teaches away from claim 29 because Metzler does not track both quality and classification of a contact (i.e. communication) with a customer as defined in claim 29 nor does he track the quality and classification for the same group of people.

In addition, to the extent Zarowitz tracks follow-up calls, there is no teaching of tracking follow-ups specifically for post sales maintenance in relation to tracking offerings of future sales.

Therefore, for the above reasons, the combination of Metzler and Zarowitz does not teach all of the elements of claim 29 which is allowable over the combination of Metzler and Zarowitz for at least these reasons.

Dependent claim 23 depends from an allowable claim 29 and is also allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 27, 2-6, 9-11, 23, 28 and 31

The Office Action has rejected claim 27 by stating that Metzler and Zarowitz teach all of the elements except for receiving billing information associated with the particular entity in the database for review by sales representatives. However, the Office Action states that Kraft teaches that concepts in sales force automation, and contact management, also applied to collections. It further states that it would have been obvious to combine Zarowitz and Metzler with Kraft to provide for reviewing the billing system in relation to the contact management system.

Amended claim 27 recites receiving and storing information in the database regarding the quality of one or more contacts with the particular entity, the quality of one or more contacts being indicated by one of a set of specific guidelines indicating the value of the contact to the sales representatives, the set of guidelines including at least: an indication of whether the contact with the particular entity is for post-sale maintenance and an indication for a contact that furthered future sales opportunities that could lead to additional business.

Claim 27 has been amended further to recite receiving and storing information in the database regarding the classification of the same one or more contacts wherein information regarding quality was also received about the particular entity, the class of one or more contacts being indicated from a set of specific customer classes including at least: a reactive contact, a contact requiring a proactive sales effort and a target contact where customers classified as reactive are those that initiated the contact with the sales representative, where customers classified as proactive are those where a sales

representative initiated the contact with the customer and targets which are customers with no known relationship with the company but may be interested in their services.

As such, claim 27 recites features of a method receiving and storing both the quality and the classification of the same customer contact (i.e. communication) which is not taught by the combined references of Metzler and Zarowitz, which teach away from the recited claims. As noted above in relation to claims 23 and 29, these recitations of claim 27 are contrary to the combined teaching of Metzler and Zarowitz, and claim 27 is allowable over Metzler and Zarowitz in view of Kraft for at least these reasons.

Dependent claims 2-6, 9-11, 23, 28 and 31 depend from an allowable claim 27 and are also allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claims 30 and 32

The Office Action has rejected claim 30 by stating that Metzler and Zarowitz teach all of the elements except for receiving billing information associated with the particular entity in the database for review by sales representatives. However, the Office Action states that Kraft teaches that concepts in sales force automation, and contact management, also applied to collections. It is further states that it would have been obvious to combine Zarowitz and Metzler with Kraft to provide for reviewing the billing system in relation to the contact management system.

Amended claim 30 recites, among other things, information retained being associated with a particular module representing the quality and classification of customers, wherein the customers are classified by how contact (i.e. communication) with the customer has occurred, the classifications including at least reactive, proactive and target, where customers classified as reactive are those that initiated the contact with the sales representative, where customers classified as proactive are those where a sales representative initiated the contact with the customer and targets which are customers with no known relationship with the company but may be interested in their services. Claim 30 further recites the quality of the customer is indicated by one of a set of specific guidelines indicating the value of the contact to the sales representatives including at least: an indication of whether the contact with the particular entity is for post-sale

maintenance and an indication of whether the contact with the particular entity is for materially furthering future sales opportunities that lead to additional business.

As such, claim 30 recites features of a method for retaining both the quality and the classification of the same customer contact, or communication, which is not taught by the combined references of Metzler and Zarowitz which teach away from the cited claims. As noted above in relation to claims 2-6, 9-11, 23, 27-29 and 31, these recitations of claim 30 are also contrary to the combination of Metzler and Zarowitz, and claim 30 is allowable over Metzler and Zarowitz in view of Kraft for at least these reasons.

Dependent claim 32 depends from an allowable claim 30 and is also allowable for at least the same reasons.

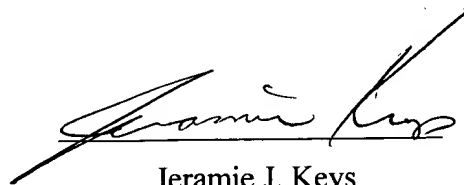
Conclusion

Claims 2-6, 9-11, 23, 25 and 27-32 are pending. Applicant requests reconsideration of claims 2-6, 9-11, 23 and 27-32 in view of the amendment and remarks above and further request that a Notice of Allowability be provided. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

No fees are believed due beyond the fee for continued examination. However, please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3025.

Respectfully submitted,

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